

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE



Cyber Threat Framework (Version 4)

Translating Cyber into English

L E A D I N G I N T E L L I G E N C E I N T E G R A T I O N



We both speak English?



- Apartment
- French Fries
- Elevator
- Gasoline
- Soccer
- Cookie



- Flat
- Chips
- Lift
- Petrol
- Football
- Biscuit



What You Need to Know

- Define Cyber Threat Framework
- Recognize the benefits of using standardized language to describe cyber activity and enable consistent categorization
- Understand the Cyber Threat Framework hierarchy and its four layers of information
- Understand how the Cyber Threat Framework can be used to support analysis



Cyber Threat Framework (CTF) Overview

The Cyber Threat Framework was developed by the US Government to enable consistent characterization and categorization of cyber threat events, and to identify trends or changes in the activities of cyber adversaries. The framework captures the adversary life cycle from (a) “PREPARATION” of capabilities and targeting to (b) initial “ENGAGEMENT” with the targets or temporary nonintrusive disruptions by the adversary to (c) establishing and expanding the “PRESENCE” on target networks, to (d) the creation of “EFFECTS and CONSEQUENCES” from theft, manipulation, or disruption. The framework categorizes the activity in increasing “layers” of detail (1- 4) as available in the intelligence reporting.



There are many cyber threat models or frameworks – *why build another?*

- Began as a construct to enhance data-sharing throughout the US Government
- Facilitates efficient situational analysis based on objective (typically, sensor-derived) data
- Provides a simple, yet flexible, collaborative way of characterizing and categorizing activity that supports analysis, senior-level decision making, and cybersecurity
- Offers a common backbone ('cyber Esperanto'); easier to map unique models to a common standard than to each other
- Facilitates cyber threat trend and gap analysis, and assessment of collection posture

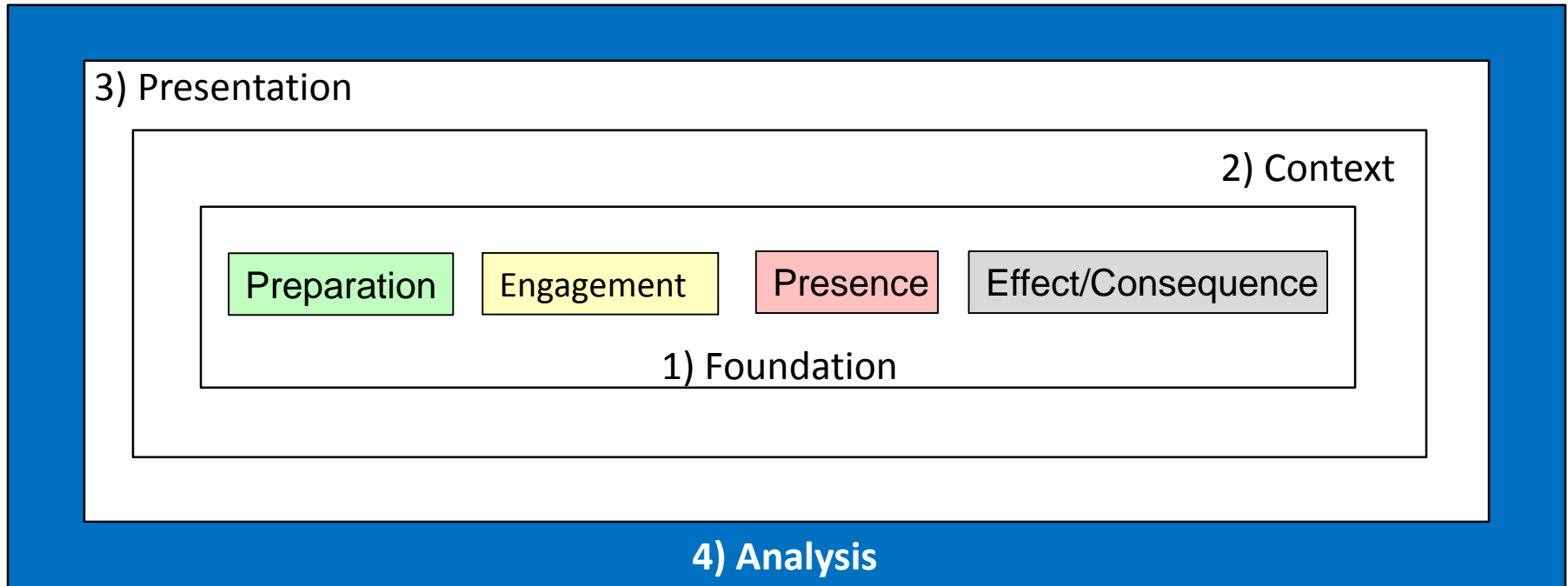


Merging Disparate Data Layers into a Common Framework is a Standard Practice

- Weather – overlaying satellite (clouds), doppler (rain), and thermometer (temperature) data atop a map yields a forecast: “take your umbrella and wear a light coat”
- Air Traffic Control – integrating weather, regional/ground control radars, scheduling data, aircraft/ground handler status to control air traffic: “you are cleared to land”
- In a similar fashion, a cyber threat framework based on measurable data facilitates visualization, analysis, and realization of a Common Operating Picture of threat activity
- It can also be matched with other data layers (e.g., vulnerability, shared connections) to become more actionable



Cyber Threat Framework Evolution



- 1) Created consensus around a foundation
- 2) Added context to validate linkages and demonstrate that you could move up and down the framework
- 3) Developed presentation models
- 4) Current focus – encompass analytics and automation

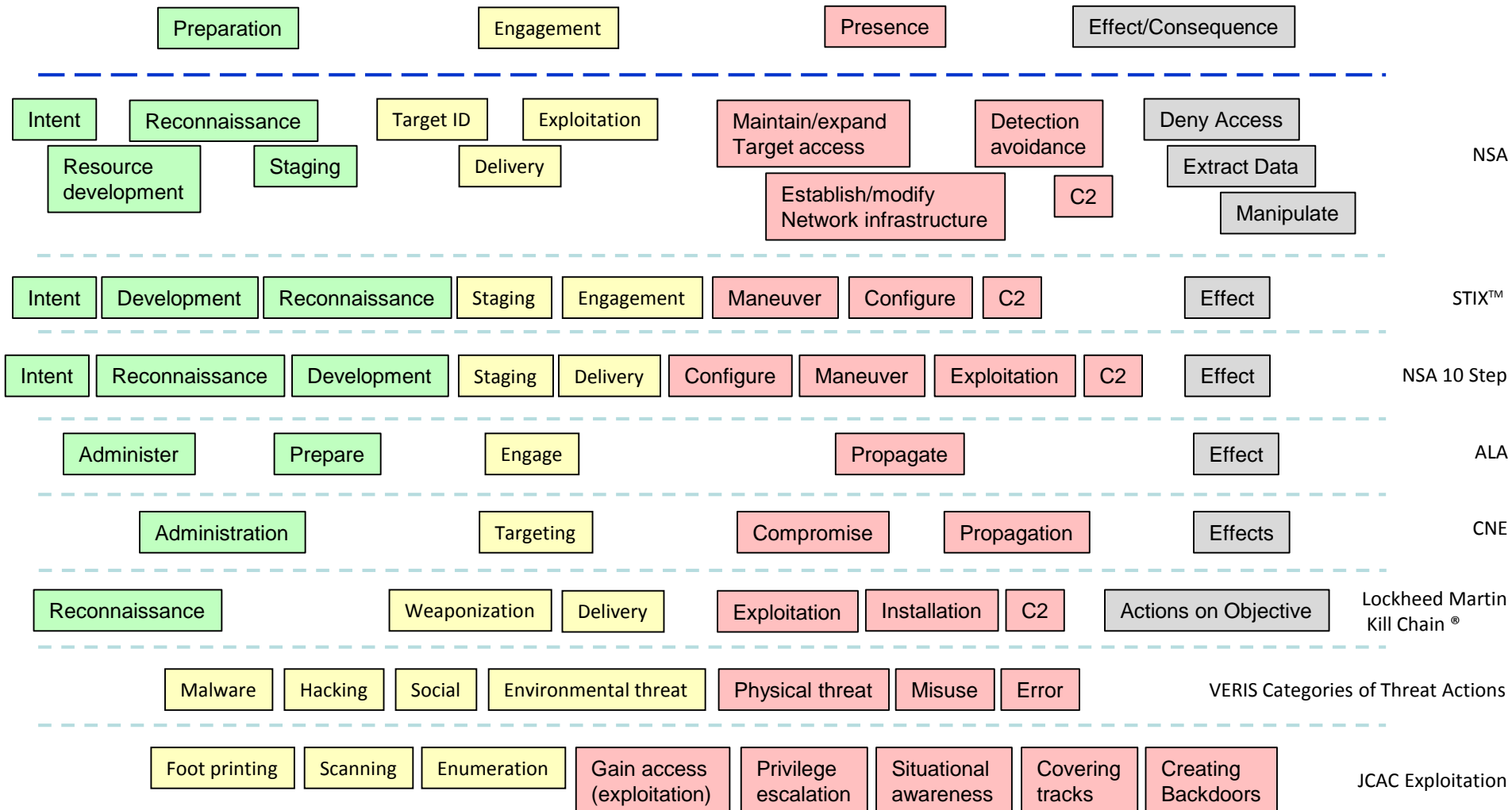


UNCLASSIFIED

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

LEADING INTELLIGENCE INTEGRATION

Deriving a 'Best of Breed' Common Framework



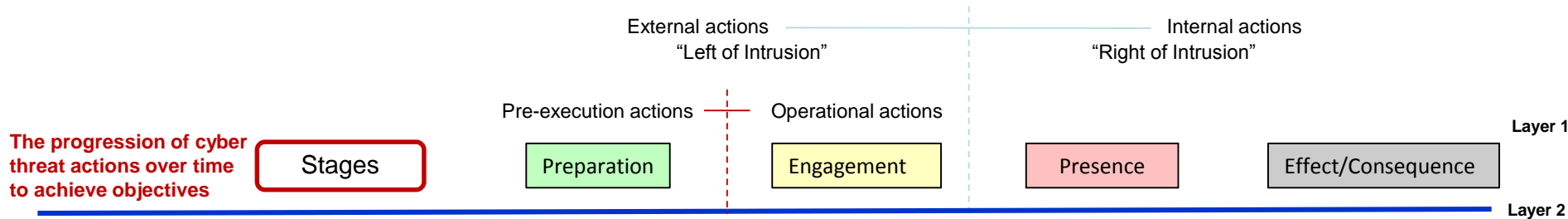


UNCLASSIFIED

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

LEADING INTELLIGENCE INTEGRATION

Cyber Threat Framework Layer 1



- Threat activity based on measurable/observable actions
- Every victim and all reported activity accounted for
- Layered data hierarchy providing activity traceability



CTF Layer 1 Definition – Preparation

Preparation

- Activities undertaken by a threat actor, their leadership and/or sponsor to prepare for conducting malicious cyber activities, e.g., establish governance and articulating intent, objectives, and strategy; identify potential victims and attack vectors; securing resources and develop capabilities; assess intended victim's cyber environment; and define measures for evaluating the success or failure of threat activities.



CTF Layer 1 Definition – Engagement

Engagement

- Threat actor activities taken prior to gaining but with the intent to gain unauthorized access to the intended victim's physical or virtual computer or information system(s), network(s), and/or data stores.



CTF Layer 1 Definition – Presence

Presence

- Actions taken by the threat actor once unauthorized access to victim(s)' physical or virtual computer or information system has been achieved that establishes and maintains conditions or allows the threat actor to perform intended actions or operate at will against the host physical or virtual computer or information system, network and/or data stores.



CTF Layer 1 Definition – Effect/Consequence

Effect/Consequence

- Outcomes of threat actor actions on a victim's physical or virtual computer or information system(s), network(s), and/or data stores.



UNCLASSIFIED

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

LEADING INTELLIGENCE INTEGRATION

Cyber Threat Framework (v4) Layer 2 Details

External actions
"Left of Intrusion"

Internal actions
"Right of Intrusion"

Pre-execution actions

Operational actions

Layer 1

Stages

Preparation

Engagement

Presence

Effect/Consequence

Layer 2

Plan activity

Deploy capability

Establish controlled access

Enable other operations

Conduct research & analysis

Interact with intended victim

Hide

Deny access

Develop resources & capabilities

Exploit vulnerabilities

Expand presence

Extract data

Acquire victim specific knowledge

Refine focus of activity

Alter computer, network or system behavior

Complete preparations

Deliver malicious capability

Establish persistence

Destroy HW/SW/data

Layer 3

Actions

Layer 4

Indicators

The progression of cyber threat actions over time to achieve objectives

The purpose of conducting an action or a series of actions

Actions and associated resources used by an threat actor to satisfy an objective

Discrete cyber threat intelligence data

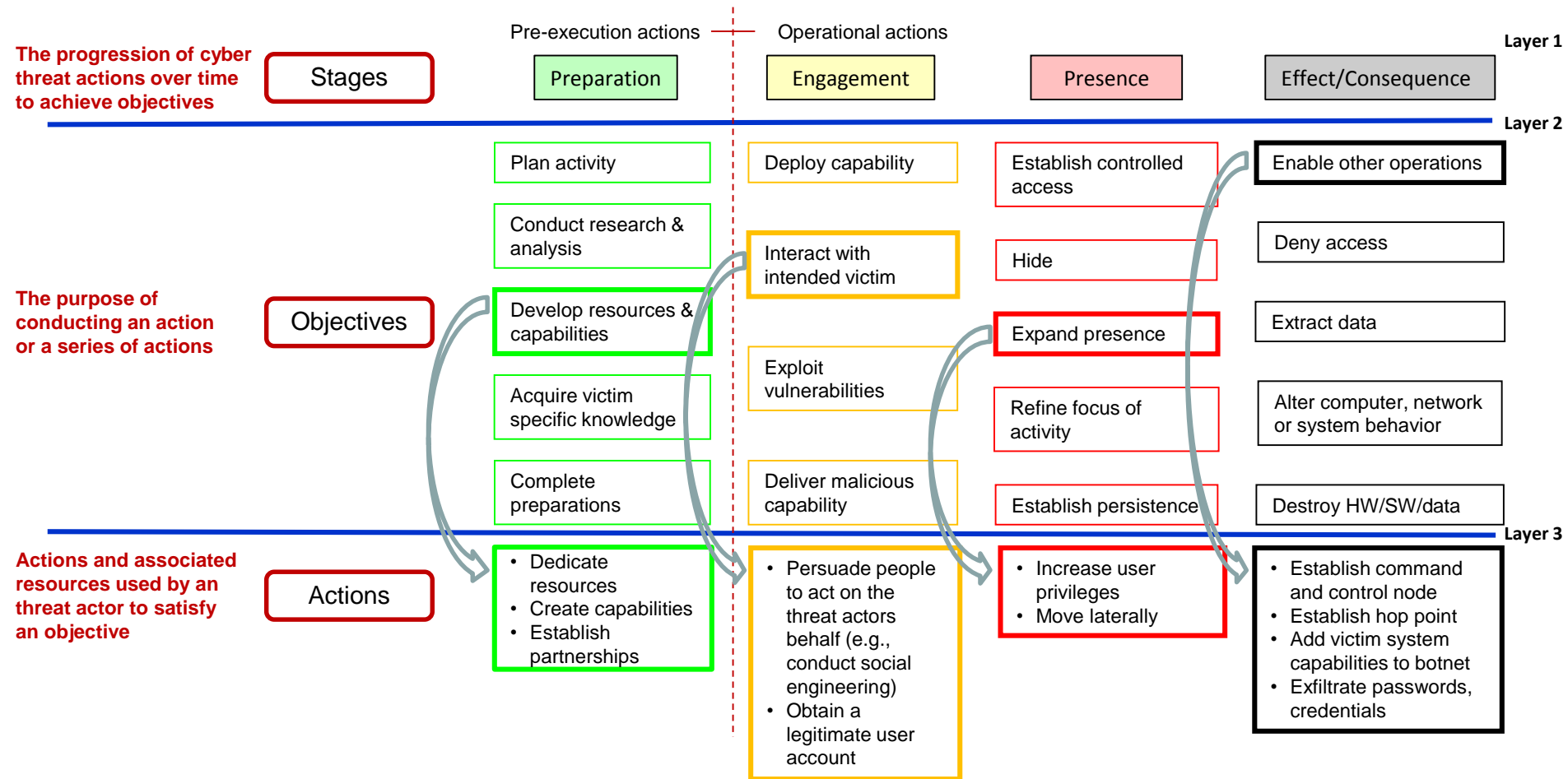


UNCLASSIFIED

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

LEADING INTELLIGENCE INTEGRATION

Cyber Threat Framework (v4) Layer 3 Exemplars





UNCLASSIFIED

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

LEADING INTELLIGENCE INTEGRATION

Cyber Threat Framework (v4) Layer 4 Exemplar

External actions
“Left of Intrusion”

Internal actions
“Right of Intrusion”

Pre-execution actions

Operational actions

Layer 1

Stages

Preparation

Engagement

Presence

Effect/Consequence

Layer 2

Plan activity

Deploy capability

Establish controlled access

Enable other operations

Conduct research & analysis

Interact with intended victim

Hide

Deny access

Develop resources & capabilities

Exploit vulnerabilities

Expand presence

Extract data

Acquire victim specific knowledge

Refine focus of activity

Alter computer, network or system behavior

Complete preparations

Deliver malicious capability

Establish persistence

Destroy HW/SW/data

Layer 3

Objectives

Actions

- Dedicate resources
- Create capabilities
- Establish partnerships

These are representative Actions that can contribute to achieving the Layer 2 Objectives.

Layer 4

Indicators

Company XXX reported to have created Malware QQ

This is a simple example of the multitude of potential Indicators of threat actor Actions.

The progression of cyber threat actions over time to achieve objectives

The purpose of conducting an action or a series of actions

Actions and associated resources used by an threat actor to satisfy an objective

Discrete cyber threat intelligence data



Consumer Needs Dictate Perspective and Content

- The foundation, based on empirical data, is the common reference point for all subsequent views
 - The consumer provides the focus by defining the view and/or adjusting the type of content (actor, activity, targeted sector, and victim)
 - The consumer defines the required granularity in each view but can “drill down” to see the underlying detail as desired
- The framework is applicable to a range of threat actors, activity, targeted sectors, and victims



Analysis

- Depending on the information selected and its presentation, one can begin to conduct a variety of analysis:
 - Trends – change over time
 - What caused the change
 - Predictive – what's next
 - Environmental
 - Was the threat different than expected
 - What vulnerabilities were missed
 - How to optimize remedial action
 - Vulnerability – risk analysis
 - Defensive posture



UNCLASSIFIED

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

LEADING INTELLIGENCE INTEGRATION

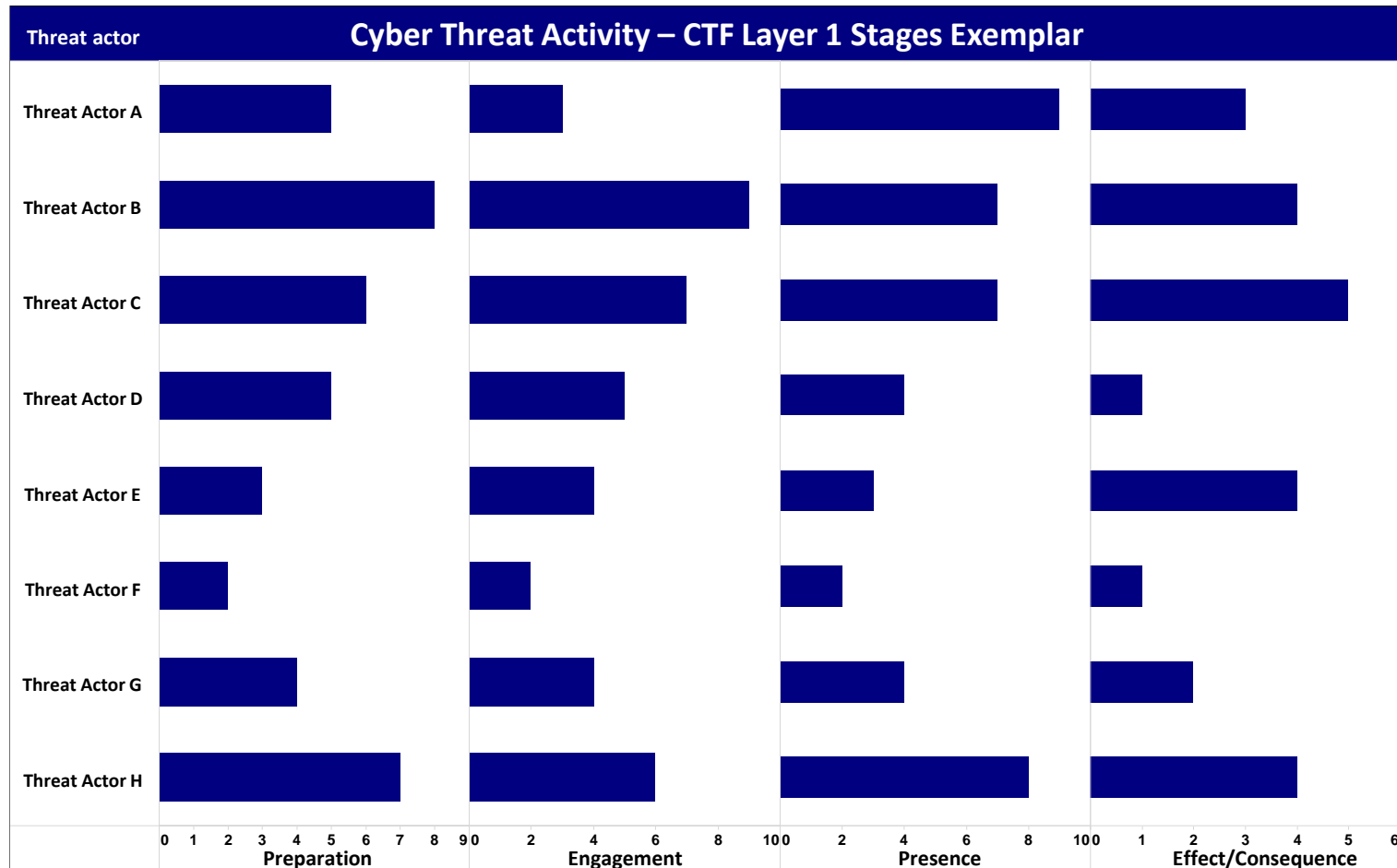
Threat Actor

Preparation

Engagement

Presence

Effect/Consequence



Reporting Period: January – March 2016



UNCLASSIFIED

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

LEADING INTELLIGENCE INTEGRATION

CTF (v4) Layer 2 Objectives Exemplar

Layer 2 Objectives		Threat Actor A	Threat Actor B	Threat Actor C	Threat Actor D	Threat Actor E	Threat Actor F	Threat Actor G	Threat Actor H
Preparation	Plan activity	■	•	■	•	■	■	•	■
	Conduct research & analysis	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Develop resources & capabilities	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	•
	Acquire victim specific knowledge	■	■	•	■	■	■	■	■
	Complete preparations	■	■	■	•	•	•	■	■
Engagement	Develop capability	•	■	•	■	■	■	■	■
	Interact with intended victim	•	■	■	■	■	■	•	■
	Exploit vulnerabilities	■	■	■	■	■	•	■	■
	Deliver malicious capability	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Presence	Establish controlled access	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Hide	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Expand presence	■	■	■	•	•	•	■	■
	Refine focus of activity	■	■	■	■	■	•	■	■
	Establish persistence	■	■	■	■	•	•	■	■
Effect/Consequence	Enable other operations	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Deny Access	•	■	■	■	■	•	■	■
	Extract data	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Alter/manipulate computer, network or system behavior	■	•	•	■	•	•	■	•
	Destroy HW/SW/data	•	•	■	•	•	•	•	■



Summary

- The Cyber Threat Framework supports the characterization and categorization of cyber threat information through the use of standardized language.
- The Cyber Threat Framework categorizes the activity in increasing “layers” of detail (1- 4) as available in the intelligence reporting.
- The Cyber Threat Framework can be used to support analysis



UNCLASSIFIED

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

LEADING INTELLIGENCE INTEGRATION

Questions?